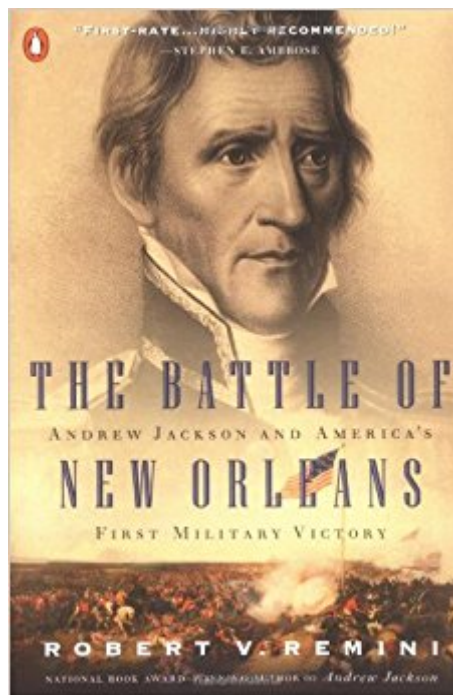


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# The Battle Of New Orleans: Andrew Jackson And America's First Military Victory



## Synopsis

The Battle of New Orleans was the climactic battle of America's "forgotten war" of 1812. Andrew Jackson led his ragtag corps of soldiers against 8,000 disciplined invading British regulars in a battle that delivered the British a humiliating military defeat. The victory solidified America's independence and marked the beginning of Jackson's rise to national prominence. Hailed as "terrifically readable" by the Chicago Sun Times, The Battle of New Orleans is popular American history at its best, bringing to life a landmark battle that helped define the character of the United States.

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## Customer Reviews

The United States and Britain had already negotiated an end to the War of 1812 when their troops met on the Plains of Chalmette near New Orleans in 1815. Word of the peace had not yet reached that far west, so a group of professional British soldiers clashed with a rag-tag band of about 4,000 "frontiersmen, militiamen, regular soldiers, free men of color, Indians, pirates, and townspeople" along the banks of the Mississippi River. These were "citizen-soldiers" in the finest sense, writes Robert V. Remini, the acclaimed biographer of Andrew Jackson, and they were commanded by a man whose military experience had commenced only two years earlier. Yet the battle "was one of the great turning points in American history" because it "produced a President and an enduring belief in the military ability of free people to protect and preserve their society and their way of life." Remini may oversell the battle's importance, but not by much. His enthusiasm is the mark of a historian in love with his subject. The Battle of New Orleans (and the War of 1812 in general) has tended to suffer more from neglect than from too much attention. This concise book, full of

workmanlike prose, is a fine introduction to what Remini calls "America's first military victory" (he downplays Saratoga and Yorktown as "simply surrenders, nothing more"). Military history buffs won't want to miss it. --John J. Miller --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As the alpha wolf of Jackson scholars and a master of historical narrative, Remini (whose three-volume biography, *Andrew Jackson*, won a National Book Award and was reissued last year) is the perfect writer to recount how Old Hickory, leading a motley crew of fighters, decisively repelled the British attack on New Orleans in January 1815. Remini's impeccable scholarship and lively pen produce what undoubtedly will become the standard account of the 1814-1815 military operations around New Orleans. In addition to some regular army units, Jackson used backwoodsmen from Tennessee and Kentucky, free blacks, Creoles and others from the local militia, Indian allies and pirates led by Jean Lafitte. Such a roster did not appear to stack up favorably against the British, who boasted thousands of veterans of the Napoleonic wars. But the British, despite their experience, committed many key blunders throughout the campaign, the most important of which was underestimating American resolve. Remini paints the background of the campaign, including battles with the pro-British Creek Indians, Jackson's invasion of Spanish Florida and the importance of the fabled Baratarian pirates led by Lafitte. As he brings the exciting story to life, Remini cogently argues that New Orleans was America's first important military victory, that it provided the impetus for the young nation to believe in itself and, just as importantly, convinced Europe that the United States was not a fleeting historical anomaly. Maps not seen by PW. (Sept.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

We all have heard of this battle as the big battle won after the War of 1812 was over. In the many books that I have read, all the stories basically stated that this battle was over very quickly and the Americans smashed the British. While Jackson and his army did smash the British, it was not quick nor guaranteed. If the British did succeed in taking New Orleans, the future of the US would have been quite different. This book went into this battle in fair, but not deep, detail. From the pirates under Lafitte, the Free Blacks, the French, the Creoles, the Cajuns, the Kentuckians, the Tennesseans, Choctaws and Cherokees, to the British side and all the heroes of the Peninsular War under Wellington. As with so many battles, a change here and change there could have had a very different outcome. To say that the US won the War of 1812, as taught in our schools, has

always been laughable. What is undeniable is that the US did kick the British in the rear end in the Battle of New Orleans. This was a good book to understanding why. There were aspects lacking to this, which would have made it even better-what the outcome meant for the pirates, the plantations, the Free Blacks, the slaves, the British who switched sides. That aside, I greatly enjoyed it. As with other reviewers, I agree, another great one by Mr. Remini.

Robert Remini, a noted and prolific scholar on Andrew Jackson, has narrowed his focus to write a colorful and informative account of the Battle of New Orleans, the final battle in Britain's unsuccessful war of invasion of the United States, the "War of 1812". Most Americans' grasp of the battle boils down to a few factoids: Andy Jackson won, pirate Jean Lafitte helped, and the battle was fought after the treaty marking its end (the Treaty of Ghent) was signed, but before news of the treaty reached the new world. Remini's success is in providing a wonderful and interesting background for the events of the battle: the polyglot and stratified society of New Orleans; continued British designs in North America even after the American colonies won their independence; and most starkly, the stalwart, near fanatical patriotism of Andrew Jackson. The British campaigning is well recounted, from attacks at Mobile Bay to the laborious transfer of troops through the Louisiana bayous, to the final disastrous assaults on entrenched American lines. This book is informative without being overly-dense to a newcomer to the material. A must-read for Americans who've let the battle and its significance slip from the national consciousness. Remini does pay a bit of lip service to the British by doing some research on their commanders and setting them in the context of their career paths. He also wraps up by noting that the Battle of New Orleans was, for decades, seen as a defining coming-of-age moment for the young American republic, it launched Jackson to the White House and was the final and true declaration of independence for newly-empowered Americans. However, Remini's unabashed flag-waving and affection for his hero create some awkward passages. Time and again he gnashes teeth at British arrogance and nearly weeps at the ragtag nature of the American army, held together by the immense will of great Jackson. At times the book borders on hero worship and veers away from analytical political/military history. So that in the end, this is a readable and interesting history, but a flawed one. An informative ride to the gates of New Orleans, but one taken from the American side.

I tend to agree with all the previous reviews of this book, both the good and the bad. That may sound a bit strange, as this is a well told historical account of the Battle for New Orleans. The book's narrative is fast and snappy, the story is well told and presented in a way that it reads like a novel.

The author, Robert V. Remini certainly loves this period of history and has a deep respect for Andrew Jackson, which shows throughout the book, maybe too much so. One of the previous reviewers mentioned the fact that the story was a bit too much like "good versus evil". I found on occasions that the American forces could do no wrong while the British were blunderers. For example, the chapter 'The Night Attack' shows Jackson throwing his troops, inferior in numbers and without full knowledge of the British forces in a spoiling attack against the advance guard of the British forces. Certainly the spoiling attack is a sound military move and paid good dividends in this instance. Jackson is shown as a daring commander however when the British forces do something very similar against the American positions they are made to sound like bumbling fools. Why is one commander a daring master and the other an idiot? On a similar note, when Jackson showed caution on a number of occasions throughout this battle he was commended but when the British leadership showed this same caution they were castigated. I agree with the author that the British leadership was ineffectual at times but that is making a judgement in hindsight. The author made mention of Jackson's burning hatred of the British and their contempt for the American forces, maybe a little of this has rubbed off on the author? Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed this book, it's a great story and my own country's history has no love of the British but I don't like it to show so one sided in any book I read. Beside that, the maps supplied (3) were of a high quality and a pleasant change but once again even the maps seemed to be one sided. The map showing the positions of the opposing forces for the attack on January 8, 1815 (page 135) show in great detail the American positions with the units indicated but nothing as detailed for the attacking British forces. Having said all that, it was pleasing to note that the author paid tribute to the brave soldiers on both sides of this terrible battle. Overall this is an excellent story, told with verve and passion and it's a great book to read. I hope that the remarks above do not offend anyone, they are not made with that intention. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys history and would like to learn about this turning point in America's history.

Very good. Thank you.

Excellent product

Thank You

Recommended reading. I highly recommend this book to those who are interested in the roots and

early development of our country.

I enjoyed it.

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